

Grounds Care Category

George M. Gaumer,

national sales and operations manager, Commercial Services, The Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio



Some of George Gaumer's earliest memories involve the green industry — he remembers playing in the yard of his father's landscape business in Warren, Ohio. In fact, the family lived on site. This early involvement extended during family vacations, when the Gaumers took time to attend annual conferences of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA).

with Wierichs. He says Wierichs is "a consensus builder. He's looking for the things that benefit everyone in an organization."

According to Kurth, Wierichs tries to pay back an industry that has been good to him by "paying forward." And he does it in true Wierichs style, Kurth says: "Lou looks out for the best interests of the industry, but makes sure to build relationships and friendships along the way. He thoroughly enjoys people and wants to spread the fun through an organization that is getting things done." □

Lawn Care Association of America.

1991-96: Board of Directors, Green Industry Expo

1994: President of PLCAA

1995-97: President of PLCAA Foundation

1996: President of Green Industry Expo

1997-98: Director of PLCAA

1997-99: President of Wisconsin Landscape Federation

1998: Vice President of Evergreen Foundation

The business and management side of the green industry always fascinated Gaumer. "I noticed that a lot of people get into the field because they love horticulture and are good at working with plants, but some people are just not good with business. That's the side that always intrigued me," he notes.

After graduating with a B.S. in Business Administration (Marketing) from The Ohio State University, he joined a residential tree care firm in Columbus, Ohio. One of his first steps on the job was to become a member of ISA, where he held various positions, including Director of the Ohio chapter. He also became an ISA-certified arborist.

In supportive company

Gaumer joined The Davey Tree Expert Co. in 1977. With Davey's support, he continued his involvement with ISA and became a charter member of the Northeast Ohio Professional Grounds Management Society branch when it was started in the early 1980s. The experience of helping to develop the PGMS branch eventually led to activities at the national level, and by 1992, he became a PGMS director at large for a three-year term.

Coincidentally, changes in the industry and in Davey's business direction made this connection more valuable for Gaumer. "I started out going to some of the national meetings as a way to get business from in-house grounds managers," he notes. "But along the way, I got involved more with the organization at the same time Davey

diversified into grounds maintenance work. Soon the meetings became educational opportunities (for us)."

Finding consensus

Jeff Bourne, director of operations and education with Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA), experienced Gaumer's team-building approach: "The phrase 'consummate professional' comes to mind because although he approaches things in a very businesslike fashion, it's well balanced with the human side, which creates an atmosphere of comfort that is productive."

David Luse, director of corporate development at LandCare USA, Houston, and founder of Arteka Corp., agrees: "George's leadership style is calm consensus building. He's a true leader and showed it by helping to pull the GIE partnership together." □

George M. Gaumer career highlights

1975: Joins Ohio Tree Surgery Co., Columbus, Ohio

1977: Joins ISA and becomes involved with industry organizations. Is appointed to Board of Governors and committee chair positions.

1977: Joins The Davey Tree Expert Co. as assistant advertising manager

1986: Becomes charter member of the Northeast Ohio Chapter, Professional Grounds Management Society.

1992-94: Board of Directors, Green Industry Expo

1994: President of Green Industry Expo

1996-98: PGMS Director at Large

1996-98: Board of Directors, Green Industry Expo